



Overall Homestead Assessment and Action Plan

Worksheet B

Keeping Idaho's Water Clean

Congratulations! With the completion of the worksheets appropriate to your homestead activities, you have nearly finished the evaluation part of the Home*A*Syst program. You have assigned relative risk rankings to your homestead practices and structures which reflect ground-water contamination potential. At this point you should have a good idea of which activities present the greatest potential to contaminate your drinking water and ground-water quality.

The next step in the Home*A*Syst program is to develop an **action plan** to correct high-risk practices. On pages two, three, and four of this worksheet, you will list those activities which landed in the shaded areas of the risk ranking summary tables of the worksheets you used. The remaining columns of the table below will help you prioritize steps you can take to better protect the drinking water and ground-water supplies of your homestead and your neighbors.

Step 1: If you haven't already done so, go back to the worksheets used and identify any individual activities or structures that you ranked in the shaded areas of the risk ranking summary tables.

Step 2: List each activity of concern on the chart on pages two, three, and four. Begin by filling in the first three blanks (to the left of the double vertical line on the chart). Do this for each of the worksheets you completed.

Step 3: Then, for each activity that you listed, fill in the "response options" and "taking action" sections to the right of the double vertical line on the chart.

- **Response options:** Check one of the two boxes: either "immediate action possible" or "further planning required." This should be a quick assessment of whether a change in practice requires major effort and money (like relocating a well or building a pesticide storage facility) or whether it requires a change in practice (like cleaning an animal lot more often or being sure that stored pesticides are clearly labeled).

- **Taking action:** Decide on a possible first step to take right now to begin to address each concern listed. It might be reducing your purchases of chemical household cleaners, or cleaning your milking center settling tank right away, or making a first phone call to get information about relocating and redesigning your pesticide storage area.

The first step for a concern that you identified as "immediate action possible" should, of course, be easier than a first step for a major or costly project. But, whatever the area of concern, what's an initial step you can take to begin to address each of the high-risk concerns you have listed?

Step 4: Keep this list handy and refer to it often. It provides important information for you as you begin to more effectively protect the ground water that provides drinking water to you and your family.

High-Risk Activities

A list of individual activities or structures that ranked in the shaded areas of your Home*A*Syst worksheets

After completing each of the assessments appropriate to your homestead, list **any individual activities or structures** that you ranked in the shaded areas of the risk rating summary table of each worksheet. Fill in the worksheet number and name, and the individual activity of concern. Indicate whether your response will be immediate or longer term. Finally, note your initial action to remedy the concern.

| Work-sheet # | Worksheet name | Individual activity identified as being high risk | Response Options (check one) | | Taking Action (proposed first step to address concern) |
|--------------|----------------|---|--|---|--|
| | | | Immediate action possible (change in practice only; cost not a factor) | Further planning required (requires major structural improvement or relocation; involves major effort or high cost) | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

(Continue listing on next page as necessary.)

| Work-sheet # | Worksheet name | Individual activity identified as being high risk | Response Options (check one) | | Taking Action (proposed first step to address concern) |
|--------------|----------------|---|--|---|--|
| | | | Immediate action possible (change in practice only; cost not a factor) | Further planning required (requires major structural improvement or relocation; involves major effort or high cost) | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

| Work-sheet # | Worksheet name | Individual activity identified as being high risk | Response Options (check one) | | Taking Action (proposed first step to address concern) |
|--------------|----------------|---|---|--|---|
| | | | Immediate action possible (change in practice only; cost not a factor) | Further planning required (requires major structural improvement or relocation; involves major effort or high cost) | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

A few final words

After doing all you can to protect your drinking water from contamination on your homestead, you may still get well tests showing some contaminants.

- One factor could be activities away from the homestead. Nitrates could be leaching from your fields, for example.
- Problems could originate in more distant areas, too. Depending on the geology on an area, activities miles away can result in contamination of the ground water slowly moving toward your property and the ground water you drink. It may take years for a spill on someone else's land to show up in your well. Leaking petroleum tanks, farm dumps, and waste pits away from your property all have the potential to affect your drinking water -- just as activities on your land have the potential to affect the drinking water of your neighbors and even others living miles away from you.

You may want to keep track of potential sources of ground-water contamination in your area. Also, you may want to encourage your neighbors to use this assessment.

On the other hand, even if your well water tests are good, your worksheet results may show the need for changes. Your well may be upslope from your home, so the water drawn from that area is not affected by your activities. That doesn't mean, that your activities are not affecting someone else's drinking water. You need to be as careful as you can, especially if you are on land vulnerable to ground-water contamination.

You may have quite a few "high-risk" pollution potential rankings. You may also be concerned about your well water test and want to know more about how your activities might have influenced the results. If so, you may want to ask for help to look more closely at potential sources in your area to determine the causes of the contamination in your drinking water.

For further information about potential sources of ground-water contamination on your homestead, contact your county Cooperative Extension System, Soil Conservation District, or Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

Practices and policies are consistent with federal and state laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or family status. The company has also been successful in providing a more secure and stable environment for its employees.